



HOW TO SUSTAIN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS — THE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE OF LEARNING PUBLISHES NEW HOW-TO GUIDE



In Kentucky, the state devotes more than \$51 million a year to Family Resource and Youth Services Centers that offer amenities such as early childhood education, after-school programs, and career exploration. In California, Oakland International School offers a student body of newcomer immigrants opportunities to receive tutoring and participate in sports outside of school hours. The collective bargaining contract in St. Paul, Minnesota includes teacher home visits. New York's \$75 million set-aside for "struggling and persistently-struggling schools in receivership" can be used for community schools-related expenses, such as constructing or renovating spaces where collaborative leadership practices can take place.

All of the above are examples of policies that support community schools, which are the subject of the *Community Schools Playbook*, a new publication from the Partnership for the Future of Learning, in collaboration with the NEPC, the Learning Policy Institute (LPI), the

Public Leadership Institute, the Coalition for Community Schools, and Research for Action.

Designed to be shared with policymakers, practitioners, advocates, and funders, the *Playbook* is a practical, how-to guide to strategies that sustain community schools. It provides examples of policies that support the approach as well as model legislation, advice on messaging, and implementation resources.

What are community schools? The *Playbook* defines them as “public schools that partner with families and community organizations to provide well-rounded educational opportunities and supports for students’ school success.” Because they are designed to serve local needs, no two look exactly alike. But a 2017 NEPC/LPI [synthesis of findings](#) from more than 140 research studies describes four key features of the model:

- 1. Integrated student supports** such as health services, parent education classes, and housing assistance.
- 2. Expanded and enriched learning time/opportunities** including after-school programs aligned with the school’s curriculum, internships, and service learning.
- 3. Active family and community engagement** that values parents as welcome and respected partners, while also serving their needs with programs such as English classes or leadership coaching.
- 4. Collaborative leadership and practices** like labor-management cooperation, school neighborhood advisory councils, and partnerships with local non-profits.

Each dollar invested in a community schools strategy results in up to a \$15 return to the community, the *Playbook* notes.

Though not new, the community schools model has been gaining in popularity in recent years due to research indicating positive impacts on students and communities. For instance, the 2015 federal Every Student Succeeds Act includes multiple funding streams that can support community schools, including a 7% Title I set-aside that permits states to use [evidence-based interventions such as community schools](#) to support under-performing schools.

To learn more about community schools:

Read the new *Playbook* and related information [here](#).

Track [this proposal](#) to provide additional funds to expand community schools.

Click [here](#) for an NEPC/LPI online research compendium on community schools.

More NEPC resources on community schools:

- [Education Interview of the Month: Greg Smith Interviews Jeannie Oakes on Community Schools](#)
- [Policy Memo: Strong Collaborative Relationships for Strong Community Schools](#)

- NEPC/LPI Policy Brief: *Community Schools: An Evidence-Based Strategy for Equitable School Improvement*
- Policy Memo: *Research-Based Expectations for Implementation of the Community Schools Initiative in New York City*
- Policy Memo: *Community Schools as an Effective Strategy for Reform*



NEPC Resources on School Reform and Restructuring

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